

COMMUNITY PLAN FOR RUGBY

Organisations Involved & Contact Details

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Aims & Target Group

The Borough of Rugby

The borough covers the town of Rugby (population 62,000) together with 40 parishes ranging in population from as little as 20 to nearly 3,000. The total population is 91,500. There are over 39,000 households, a quarter of which are single occupancy. The number of people aged over 45 is set to increase, meaning that the population, as in the rest of the UK, is aging.

People from minority ethnic communities represent 6.8 per cent of the Borough's population. These groups comprise a significant Indian majority, but there are sizeable populations of Pakistani, African-Caribbean and Chinese families.

The Borough of Rugby has a strong sense of its own distinct identity, which embraces both urban and rural areas. Nevertheless, the borough-wide generalisations above conceal a wide diversity of communities and community needs.

Three of Rugby's wards (Benn, Newbold and Brownsover) face significant deprivation according to the Government's Index of Local Deprivation. Rural villages too face their own particular problems, which are often less obvious to spot and harder to tackle.

Aim and target group

The original aim was to develop new audiences for the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum (RAGM). The Pupil Reintegration Unit (PRU) and Youth Offending Team (YOT) would access a creative resource enabling young people to experience artists and art in its widest sense.

The partnership also aimed to breakdown some of the barriers that prevent young people from visiting the RAGM.

The partners agreed that all future work should be part of an ongoing program, which would develop over time rather than be a single one-off project.

Project Description & Components

This partnership grew out of Rugby Borough Council's work developing projects to support its Social Inclusion Strategy. In 2003 a meeting was arranged between the Pupil Reintegration Unit (PRU), the Youth Offending Team (YOT), and the Rugby Art Gallery and Museum (RAGM) to discuss the possibility of working together.

The council's social inclusion strategy includes significant work to reduce crime and disorder and antisocial behaviour, particularly in areas of high deprivation such as the Benn, Newbold





and Brownsover wards. The strategy aims to improve security by working in partnership with key agencies including Positive Futures, YOT and PRU to support young people.

Three Projects

Three individual projects were undertaken over three years. All the projects were based on an exhibition at RAGM and included young people who were being educated within the PRU. Many of these young people were also known to YOT.

The first project was conceived quickly to capitalise on the positive initial meeting held by RAGM, the PRU and YOT. This project was evaluated and the lessons learnt from it were incorporated into the second project. Evaluation has been a continuous theme of the partnership working. The success of the projects has grown alongside the success of the partnership.

Project One: Made in Rugby (January 2004 to March 2004)

Inspired by the 'Made in the Middle' exhibition, a craftspace touring exhibition, this was a 14-week project involving hard-to-reach learners aged 12 to 16. A total of 13 young people worked with a local textile artist, Barbara Fidoe, to create artwork for inclusion in the 'Made in the Middle' exhibition. This was then displayed in the RAGM.

Project Two: Middle England (October 2004 to March 2005)

Inspired by the Exhibition 'Another Country' by Andrew Cross, 'Middle England' was a 12-week project involving 14 young people. Two regional artists worked with separate groups of young people. The first group were GCSE students who worked with photographer, Mark Stammers travelling in and around Rugby photographing the landscape. They produced a series of photographs that formed part of the exhibition. The second group were primary school children. They worked with video artist, Nicky Cure. Here the emphasis was on the exploration of materials as a means of expression and communication. This work was also used in the exhibition.

Project Three: Scrap to Wrap (January 2006 to March 2006)

Inspired by the exhibition 'The Balance of Being' by David Kefford, 'Scrap to Wrap' is a project spread over 21 half-day sessions involving up to 18 young people. Young people taking part in the project are working with artists to create large sculptures made from recycled materials. As in the previous project, one group is of primary school age. Two groups are working towards their GCSE's and the work carried out in this project will count towards their final coursework.

Two artists are working alongside the students, including one who previously worked in the Middle England project. The second is the sculptor, David Kefford who is responsible for the exhibition the project is based upon. The young people's work will be shown in the RAGM in April 2006.

While the overall aims of all the individual projects are continual, each project works in media appropriate to the exhibition offering new areas of artistic teaching to the PRU art classes. 'Scrap to Wrap' adds value to this year's scheme of work through sculpture with recycled materials

Process

Partnership Working

Rugby has a long and successful record of partnerships stretching back to 1993 and the creation of the Rugby Partnership. The Council and its partners have worked hard to develop





a 'bottom up' approach to the creation of a Community Plan for Rugby. The guiding principle has been that the Community Plan should be owned by the communities of the borough and not simply be a document for statutory agencies.

The Community Plan evolved from a major consultation exercise conducted in 2000 under the banner of 'doorstep democracy' in which over 1,000 local people took part. The same inclusive approach has been adopted in developing a new local strategic partnership (LSP) called Rugby Forward.

Rugby Forward was designed by a working party of volunteers from different sectors following a conference attended by almost 100 people. The new partnership has been launched this year and membership is open to all. It includes representatives from the Rugby Borough Council; Warwickshire County Council; parish councils; Warwickshire Police; Rugby Primary Care Trust; the Rugby Chamber; the voluntary and community sectors; and members of the public.

Who was involved?

A planning team was made up of staff from the RAGM, the PRU and the artists engaged in the individual project.

A timetable was developed that set out the key milestones of the project.

PRU staff, young people and the artists attended the workshops.

All those involved in the project set up the exhibition.

The mayor opens the exhibitions. All those who took part in the work and the local dignitaries are invited. The PRU is given invitations to send to relevant partners.

Outcomes

One important key outcome of all the projects is the recognition that partnership working is an evolving process. Each project presented challenges, which all the partners were keen to evaluate and learn from.

At each stage of the project, evaluation has led to further learning points. The following is a description of the outcomes and proposed future improvements:

Project One: Made in Rugby (January 2004 to March 2004)

Successful outcomes included the young people experiencing success in the public domain. In addition, all participants who completed the project achieved an AQA accreditation for their work. Two of the participants used the project as part of their GCSE art coursework.

Project Two: Middle England (October 2004 to March 2005)

Successful outcomes included the young people exhibiting in a public gallery. What is more, a third of the young people involved had never visited an art gallery before. Afterwards 80 per cent of them said they would visit again.

Positive comments from the visitors' book included: "An excellent idea! I'm sure the project will encourage young people to see ordinary places differently."

Project Three: Scrap to Wrap (January 2006 to March 2006)

The 'Scrap to Wrap' workshops will be held alongside the actual exhibition to make the link between the workshops and the gallery. This link was not clear at the 'Made in the Middle' exhibition as the workshops happened beforehand. This meant that many of the young people who worked on the project did not see the link between the two.

The 'Scrap to Wrap' project is offering an experience and range of techniques that is not normally available at the Pupil Reintegration Unit.

Artists have been selected according to experience, rather than through open application, to match the requirements of projects and ensure greater success.





Challenges & Obstacles

The project depends on funding from external resources if it is going to continue. The plan is to seek a longer funding arrangement and to plan in advance of the financial year. This will allow the PRU to develop workshop content and plan national curriculum work around forthcoming projects.

One potential barrier to success would be if the designated artist and PRU staff could not work together. To ensure that this does not happen the PRU staff are fully engaged in making the decision about which artist to use, and both parties (artist and PRU) are clear about their respective roles and responsibilities. Success from the project is hard to measure in each case. Many experiences contribute to a child's overall achievement in the long term.

Funding

Project One: Made in the Rugby: £5,616 from the following sources: Esme Fairbourne Foundation; 'Made in the Middle' Developing New Audiences Fund; resources and in kind support from RAGM and the PRU.

Project Two: Middle England: £6,400 from: The Building Safer Communities Fund; the RAGM; and the PRU.

Project Three: Scrap to Wrap: £4,500 from: The Building Safer Communities Fund; and the PRU. Staffing resources were supplied by the PRU. Staffing and materials were supplied by RAGM.

Images

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